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LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP MEETING

June 28, 1954

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

Indo-China - Sec. Dulles told the Leaders there were some signs of a solution developing. He said that if there is to be a line drawn to separate the free world from Communist in Southeast Asia, it must be a line that the people in that area are prepared to join in defending, for the United States cannot be expected to rush in singlehandedly. As it is shaping up, the line would put on the side of the free world the states of Thailand, Laos and Cambodia, and a part of Indo-China. Many uncertainties remain, and he thought it a matter of making the best of a bad situation as in Korea.

Eisenhower Library

The President wanted to add emphasis to the impossibility of the United States going into any area to give support unless the support were requested. Also, the U.S. would be bogged down from the start if the people of any area got the idea that we would rush in on their request no matter how they handle things. So there will not be any sort of guarantee as was involved in the Locarno Pact. The President asserted the general principles of our behavior were laid down as much as fifteen months ago.

Responding to Sen. Knowland's question, Sec. Dulles said the French were still hoping for some sort of an enclave to be maintained in the Delta region, but this didn't really seem possible for more than a very brief period if at all.

Mr. Dulles said we were not fully taken into their confidence by the French, that the French were carrying on some private talks. He went on to remark how a message had come just yesterday from Mendes-France giving expression to his hope that should the talks break down we would take a very serious view of the situation. He felt this was a strange message, given all our past effort to get the French to take a serious view of it!

Sen. Knowland wanted all precautions taken to see that any supplies we had furnished for the Delta area should be gotten out to safety rather than being left behind for the Communists. The President didn't think the French would just walk out on the situation, and the "regrouping" under discussion did not just mean surrender. Mr. Dulles said we had a legal right to repossess these materials if they were not being used in the way intended, but of course there could be a very great problem in actually repossessing. Sen. Knowland wanted to be sure there was advance planning for sufficient shipping to be in the area in case a time limit were put on any evacuation decided upon. The President and Mr. Dulles had already alerted Defense to this.

Reciprocal Trade - Mr. Dulles spoke of the Symington amendment

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